

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

**Two Key Initial Elements of the Personnel Transformation Drive to the Objective Force**

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The views expressed in this academic research paper are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, or any of its agencies.

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## ABSTRACT

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In early 2000, the Army DCSPER realized that changing the Army personnel system would be critical to the overall success of the Army Transformation effort. His dream and vision was to transform the Army's personnel and finance systems so they would be "waiting at the finish line" when the rest of the Army arrived at the Objective Force in 2015. This study reviews two key initial elements of Army Personnel Transformation within the scope of the overall Army Transformation effort. The first is an examination of the Personnel Enterprise System, which is the heart of the initial Personnel Transformation effort. The second is a review of unit manning, which if adopted, will be the most significant personnel policy and cultural change for the Army in many years.



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## TWO KEY INITIAL ELEMENTS OF THE PERSONNEL TRANSFORMATION DRIVE TO THE OBJECTIVE FORCE

In October 1999, Chief of Staff of the Army (CSA) Eric Shinseki announced the beginning of Army Transformation,<sup>1</sup> an effort to change the way the Army will deploy, fight, sustain, and use information, which will result in being more strategically responsive and dominant across the full spectrum of operations.<sup>2</sup> This effort to transform the Army is clearly about the dramatic change necessary to create an Objective Force Army which will be much more lethal than the Army of today, and will support the overall effort to transform the Department of Defense. The Army of 2015 will utilize the speed of deployment, speed of employment and new concepts in logistics to sustain the force. By utilizing technological leaps during the next several years, the Objective Force Army will be highly networked with integrated joint and multinational command and control.<sup>3</sup>

Many people wonder what the Objective Force Army will look like in 2015. While the answer today remains unknown, the concept, design and capabilities are beginning to take shape.<sup>4</sup> Since 1999, the Army has aggressively pursued transformation objectives on all fronts. In November 2001, the CSA provided further guidance to the Army in his White Paper on the development of the Objective Force.

The Objective Force Concept describes how future Army forces will conduct prompt and sustained combat incident to operations on land. The concept envisions a skilled, knowledge-based force, exploiting the revolutionary potential of information superiority and networked sensors, shooters, supporters and decision makers. Objective Force units will be substantially different in structure and content than their predecessors. Combined arms will be organic at lower tactical levels. Units will be modular and organizations will be highly versatile. Revised training and education that strengthen soldier and leader initiative, adaptiveness, and skills will underpin advanced material capabilities. The Objective Force will be more responsive, more deployable, more agile, more versatile, more lethal, more survivable and more sustainable than today's forces, ready to provide precise and dominant capabilities for land campaigning. The Objective Force is optimized to win on the offense, initiate combat on its terms, gain and maintain the initiative, and build momentum to win – decisively. The Objective Force will provide combatant commanders with the means for decisive victory in land combat operations and a full spectrum capability for all other uses of military power.<sup>5</sup>

To arrive at the Objective Force, the Army will utilize a three phase attack consisting of the Legacy Force, an Interim Force and the Objective Force, the latter to be fielded by 2015. The Legacy Force maintains current Army operational capabilities during transformation while the Interim Force provides new organizations such as the Stryker Brigade that have



transformational capabilities. Research and development provided by the Army's Science and Technology program will provide the engine of change to take the Army to the Objective Force.<sup>6</sup> The end result of the Army's transformation in concepts, capabilities and institutions will be an Army with the ability to deploy a brigade anywhere in the world in 96 hours; a division in 120 hours; and five divisions in 30 days.<sup>7</sup>

So what is the key to this effort? From the CSA's perspective, the central point in the transformation effort rests with the people who serve and perform the nation's business. "Soldiers remain the centerpiece of the Army's Objective Force," he pointed out in his White Paper. "Our most magnificent moments will continue to be delivered by our people."<sup>8</sup> And in a subsequent speech, General Shinseki emphasized that the "vision of the Army begins and ends by talking about people. We resolved to do what we could to build an Army that is both enriching as a profession and the right place to raise a family. For the American soldier, it's never been about the money. It has always been about preserving our freedoms--no matter the cost--and about profound trust inside this institution: soldier to soldier, leader to led, unit to unit. And it's always been about leadership's sacred duty to take care of our people."<sup>9</sup>

Numerous senior leaders have recognized the need to transform personnel systems to support the overall transformation objectives. "We need a personnel transformation that matches the physical one," Undersecretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness David Chu recently observed. "The Pentagon must transform the way it manages its personnel to match the ongoing effort to transform the material capabilities of the services."<sup>10</sup> Outgoing Secretary of the Army Thomas White was equally adamant about the criticality of transforming the personnel system. "If you look at the Army and you've been around the Army for a while," he pointed out, "you come to the glaringly obvious conclusion that 'It's the personnel system, stupid.' If we don't fundamentally change the personnel system of the Army, then the sum total of all the rest of this will not be nearly as effective as it could be."<sup>11</sup>

In early 2000, Lieutenant General Tim Maude, the Deputy Chief of Staff, Personnel (DCSPER) of the Army, realized that changing the Army personnel system would be critical to the overall success of the Army transformation effort. His dream and vision was to transform the Army's personnel and finance systems with an ultimate objective of waiting at the finish line when the rest of the Army arrived at the Objective Force in 2015.<sup>12</sup>

While transforming the personnel system is not entirely new, altering it to meet the needs of the Objective Force will be much different than any transformation effort of the past. During the last 20 years, transformation of personnel systems and capability centered more on evolution of unit operational capabilities and systemic changes in personnel accountability.

During that period, personnel units evolved from large Adjutant General Companies, to Personnel Service Companies and then to Personnel Services Battalions and Groups. The mechanism to provide personnel accountability evolved from large bulky computers utilizing punch cards to more modern computer technology provided with Standard Installation/Division Personnel System (SIDPERS) 3. In recent years, SIDPERS capabilities and personnel accountability improved significantly with the introduction of the Super Server. From the users' perspective, the Army personnel system has evolved from one where everything required paper to one that is becoming increasingly paperless. Through it all, regardless of the system or product used, the central theme has always been and always will be "take care of the customer, and do it the right way."

With a clear thought of the dramatic change the transformation effort would require, General Maude formed the Army Personnel Transformation Task Force in February 2001 and assigned them the mission to successfully integrate all aspects of Personnel Transformation. Encompassing the Active Army, Army National Guard, Army Reserve and Civilian Personnel, this effort was a critical step in beginning the road to the Objective Force for the personnel community. In May 2001 at the Personnel Leaders Meeting, Maude provided his vision for the way ahead. Central to this vision was a transformation of current legacy systems utilizing technology and Internet web based processing, leading ultimately to the successful fielding of the Defense Integrated Military Human Resources System (DIMHRS).

The Army then developed a three phase Campaign Plan to support the overall transformation effort and the personnel community developed a Campaign Plan to support each phase. The three phases identified were the Initial Phase, Interim Capability Phase and the Objective Capability Phase.<sup>13</sup> Lead agents were assigned different areas, or Lines of Operation, with the G-1 being assigned Line of Operation 3 (Human Resources). To support the overall plan, the G-1 developed the objectives of manning the force, ensuring the well-being of soldiers, and Personnel Transformation.<sup>14</sup>

Tragically, Lieutenant General Maude was killed in the 11 September 2001 terrorist attack on the Pentagon. Shortly thereafter, Lieutenant General John M. Le Moyne assumed the duties as the Army G-1. In addition to assuming the role as leader of the Army Personnel Community, he assumed the lead in the mission to transform the Army's personnel system.

In recent testimony before Congress, Lieutenant General Le Moyne presented five themes which provide the integrated framework for Personnel Transformation. Personnel Enterprise System, Manning, Force Structure, Training and Leader Development, and Well Being provide the basis for concept development, decision-making, and resource allocation

required for Personnel Transformation.<sup>15</sup> The themes also serve as the basis of the plan to transition the current legacy personnel system into one which will support the Objective Force Army. Unit Manning was not originally envisioned as part of Personnel Transformation, but in September 2002, the Secretary of the Army added the requirement to study it as an alternative to the current individual replacement system.<sup>16</sup>

This study reviews two key components of Army Personnel Transformation within the scope of the overall Army transformation effort. Since a critical examination of the entire proposed personnel system is much too wide in scope, this study centers first on the heart of the Personnel Transformation effort, which is the Personnel Enterprise System. Secondly, it reviews unit manning, which if adopted, will be the most significant personnel policy and cultural change for the Army in many years. Before examining these two key components, it is important to first review how the Objective Force Army is projected to look in 2015.

### **OBJECTIVE FORCE – THE ARMY IN 2015**

The conceptual Objective Force Army of 2015 will be profoundly different than the Army that recently concluded major combat operations in the second Gulf War with Iraq. In specific terms, it will be a force:

Which provides the nation with a joint, interagency, multi-national (JIM) precision maneuver instrument, with seamless integration of the Reserve Components...which provides a critical combat multiplier to the Joint Forces Commander. This sensory intensive force will provide the full spectrum of military operations and provide the soldier with the right communications equipment and knowledge to send and receive information at the right time and place. Utilizing brigade size Units of Action (UA) and division size Units of Employment (UE) it will be a strategically and operationally responsive Army. The UA will be self-sustainable for 3-7 days of operations, maintain combat power with a much reduced combat services support footprint through reach-back capability; sustained velocity management; real time tracking of materiel, equipment, and personnel (military, civilian and contractors) and will be interoperable with joint forces. In the final analysis, this Objective Force Army will have completed a holistic revolution in doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leader development, people and facilities. This transformed Army will represent not only a change in the operational Army, but also dramatic change to the institutional Army.<sup>17</sup>

From the description above, the most significant aspect of developing these capabilities is the realization they will be achieved in the next 12 years, which is the same period that elapsed between the two Gulf Wars. One example of transformational capabilities developed during that span concerns precision guided munitions. One needs only to view reports from embedded journalists traveling with units today in Iraq and from Central Command briefings to see the

improvement in this critical area since the last war. Similar types of dramatic change are envisioned during the next 12 years. In 2015, if all goes as planned, the Objective Force Army will consist of 5 Units of Employment, 15 Units of Action, 6 Stryker Brigade Combat Teams, 2 and 1/3 Digital Corps, and a combination of heavy, light, and specialty forces brigades (airborne, air assault, Special Forces), Army Reserve Units, and 4 Multi-Functional Army National Guard Divisions.<sup>18</sup>

To achieve this transformation will require a phenomenal effort by the Army, the necessary resources provided by Congress, and the combined efforts of research and development coupled with a synergistic effort on the part of defense industry. It will require the continued focus of the Army leaders of today and tomorrow. Those Objective Force Army leaders of tomorrow are the company grade officers and junior enlisted soldiers in the Army today. For them, virtually every aspect of the current Army could be changed in some form by the transformation to the Objective Force.

Command structures will be more flexible and able to accommodate missions more quickly based on the changing situation. In addition to a deployable command post and the commander's mobile command group, the headquarters will utilize a Home Station Operations Center (HSOC), which is a multi-capable center deployed forces will link to utilizing their reach-back capability.<sup>19</sup> By providing 24-hour support, deployed forces will be linked to the national sustaining base and other agencies for information and support. Most importantly, it will be critical to reducing the support footprint for deployed forces.<sup>20</sup>

Utilizing advanced technology, knowledge dominance and network centric operations, the Objective Force Army will be very powerful, with all of the associated advanced technology and equipment capabilities which the nation can produce. But regardless of the eventual Objective Force design, it will continue to center on the abilities of its most precious asset – the soldier.

## **PERSONNEL ENTERPRISE SYSTEMS**

During the next 12 years, the Army will simultaneously have Legacy, Interim, and Objective Forces in operation as transformation is pursued. The Army G-1's intent centers on completing Personnel Transformation to ensure that the tools, programs, policies and systems are in place to support manning, personnel readiness and the well-being of soldiers.<sup>21</sup> Throughout the transformation effort, the key Battlefield Personnel Functions (personnel accounting and strength reporting, casualty reporting, replacement operations, postal operations, and personnel services), will remain embedded within these core competencies.<sup>22</sup>

From a life cycle perspective, soldiers are touched by the personnel system from the first moment a prospective recruit is interviewed by a recruiter, to the myriad of actions that occur while on active duty, through the hand-off to Veterans Affairs at separation or retirement. While the Army's Personnel Life Cycle functions (acquire, structure, distribute, develop, deploy, compensate, sustain, and transition) will not change under Personnel Transformation, the method whereby these functions are accomplished will change as the personnel community leaves legacy systems behind and begins to utilize web-based technology.<sup>23</sup>

During the Initial Phase of Army Transformation, the Army is composed of the current Legacy Forces and two Stryker Brigade Combat Teams. From the personnel perspective, the priorities for this phase include business process redesign, which is the transformation of Personnel Enterprise Systems, structure decisions, and well-being.

In terms of personnel operational capability, the Initial Phase offers dramatic change, and is crucial to the long term success of Personnel Transformation. The heart of the initial effort centers on the successful transformation of legacy operational capabilities and the design of DIMHRS. Success here will provide flexible personnel support not only to the Legacy Force, but to the Interim and Objective Force as they come on line.

In looking ahead at the personnel system requirements for the Objective Force Army, it is important to realize that personnel support provided to today's legacy force is affected by the *location of the customer*. In the United States, most Personnel Battalions are organized functionally, with detachments organized as SIDPERS, Records and Actions. This allows for expertise to be grouped together on a functional basis, providing support to the thousands of soldiers and family members located on each installation. At overseas locations in Germany and Korea, Personnel Battalions are organized multi-functionally with each personnel detachment providing personnel services to a large geographic area. Additionally, each Battalion has an active duty postal company which provides postal support to the same geographic footprint.

Successfully changing the manner in which these capabilities are delivered and eliminating the importance of location of the customer are critical steps necessary to complete the Initial Phase of the Army Personnel Transformation effort. With the ability to rapidly deploy forces anywhere in the world being a cornerstone of the Objective Force, the personnel system which supports it must have the same capabilities and must be designed to provide that support regardless of the location of supported forces. In order to achieve these capabilities, the Personnel Enterprise System forms the heart of the Army Personnel Transformation effort.

Personnel Enterprise System refers to the operational infrastructure and knowledge architecture that will deliver personnel services to soldiers and commanders and enhance operational readiness for the Army. These enablers affect the operational capability currently being delivered by the legacy personnel units and the key personnel services provided to the soldiers today. The new capabilities will include online services, transactional capabilities, and analytical decision support with accurate and timely data.<sup>24</sup>

Successfully fielding the electronic Military Personnel Office (eMILPO) is one of the highest priorities in the Initial Phase of Personnel Transformation. Scheduled for fielding later this year, eMILPO will replace the SIDPERS Super Server as the personnel information management system for the Army. In essence, it is a single web-based database that will replace the current 43 databases being utilized today across the Army.<sup>25</sup> This capability will significantly improve business process redesign, will enhance accountability of soldiers, and will be the single field database for the Army. In terms of operational infrastructure and knowledge architecture, eMILPO will be a critical leap ahead for the personnel community during the Initial Phase of Personnel Transformation. This will enable follow-on structure decisions to be finalized and implemented, and lay the groundwork for the next two phases.

Implementation of an electronic evaluation form and electronic signature program is scheduled to be completed by the end of this year.<sup>26</sup> These two capabilities will allow world-wide electronic submission of officer and enlisted evaluation reports, eliminating the manual method of mailing reports, while improving timeliness of report submission, improving promotion board processing, and eliminating some of the work currently being performed in legacy personnel units around the world. This process is clearly needed and will allow any rating official anywhere in the world with access to Army Knowledge Online (AKO) to process a report. From a deployment or overseas perspective, this will offer transformational change in the area of reach-back to home station or to Department of the Army.

Other Personnel Enterprise System enablers include automation of promotion to 1LT and CW2 (date to be determined); automation of the Army Selection Board System, which was tested with a recent board, and the fielding of the Army Records Information Management System (ARMIS), which will revolutionize record keeping in the Army.<sup>27</sup>

Two other critical enablers are the Enlisted Record Brief (ERB), which is similar to the Officer Record Brief, and the development of an automated Promotion Worksheet for Sergeant and Staff Sergeant. Both of these initiatives are scheduled to be fielded by the end of this year. When completely initiated, these enablers will eliminate thousands of man hours currently being

expended by legacy personnel units. From a customer perspective, these automated systems will dramatically improve these key personnel tools.<sup>28</sup>

A legacy personnel system which still needs to be addressed is reassignment processing and the manual production of reassignment orders currently accomplished by Personnel Services Battalions. While some improvements have been initiated at the Department of the Army level, such as the Enlisted Assignment Satisfaction Key (ASK), the reassignment process at the operational level remains the same. The Officer and Enlisted Assignment System will be significantly improved when this process is transformed and the electronic order is placed on the Army database where any organization needing verification or access to the information could retrieve it. For example, the process to move household goods, or ship a vehicle overseas, could be enhanced when and if the reassignment system is transformed. This is an area that needs to be addressed.

While eMILPO is the next leap ahead in the evolving personnel system, DIMHRS must be considered as the ultimate nerve center of the Personnel Enterprise System. This Internet based system will provide the most pivotal transformational change to the Army and Department of Defense personnel and pay systems and serves as an example of how transformation efforts can and will overlap during the different phases of transformation. As the single integrated personnel and pay system for the military, it will also support multi-component, joint, single service and combined task organized forces.<sup>29</sup>

By transforming the current, separate critical pay and personnel systems, the result will be a single system which ensures accuracy, timeliness and accountability for all services.<sup>30</sup> Since the Army is the first service to field DIMHRS, the CSA and Secretary of the Army recently provided specific Army guidance concerning DIMHRS support to the Objective Force:

The Army will implement the Defense Integrated Military Human Resources System (DIMHRS) in the fiscal year (FY) 2004-05 timeframe to perform core joint military personnel and pay functions. The Army will leverage its underlying software to act as our Enterprise Human Resource (eHR) system. Our goal is to reengineer and integrate all military personnel and pay functions under this common software architecture. Civilian personnel and pay functions will be considered for consolidation with DIMHRS in the FY07 timeframe.<sup>31</sup>

When the contractor to develop DIMHRS is selected later this year, the Army will be one step closer to this significant transformational capability. One of the keys for DIMHRS will be the linkage to the Future Combat System (FCS). It is imperative this linkage occurs, to enable key personnel strength information is available to supported commanders via FCS without additional human intervention.<sup>32</sup>

DIMHRS will provide supported commanders something desperately needed today – visibility of personnel assets, both active and reserve, in an ever increasing joint environment.<sup>33</sup> For individual soldiers, DIMHRS will provide via the Internet the ability to conduct personnel and pay business from outside the battle space<sup>34</sup> and from anywhere in the world where AKO can be accessed. In essence, this system will connect soldiers directly to their personnel and pay system.

In addition to this type of impact, DIMHRS will provide the Army a single historical record for each soldier, from initial entry through separation, to include any record of service for both active and reserve components. The improvements to pay and personnel during mobilization and demobilization will be one of the most significant aspects of the new system. The flexibility and accountability of personnel to supported commanders will be dramatic. In the final analysis, DIMHRS is absolutely critical to the overall Personnel Transformation effort and the evolving personnel system to support the Objective Force.

When the Personnel Enterprise System redesign is completed, personnel services to the customer will be dramatically improved and the heart and nerve center of the initial Personnel Transformation effort will be completed. From an event perspective, the Initial Phase of Personnel Transformation will end with the initial fielding of DIMHRS, which is scheduled for late 2004.<sup>35</sup> Since the contractor is being selected later this year, it is likely the initial fielding will not occur until 2005. While DIMHRS may not meet all the personnel capabilities envisioned for the Army's Objective Force,<sup>36</sup> it will surely play a significant role in the ultimate design of the personnel system for that force.

## **UNIT MANNING**

There is no question that the evolving personnel system for the Objective Force Army must be flexible in design and able to withstand dramatic change. One early challenge is offered by the second key area of this study, which is unit manning. In September 2002, the Secretary of the Army directed a review of the Army manning policy to consider implementation of a unit manning system vice the current individual personnel replacement system.<sup>37</sup> A Task Force was formed on 18 October 2002 with the primary goal of providing recommendations to Army leaders on the total redesign of the Army's personnel assignment system.<sup>38</sup> In December 2002, the Secretary of the Army told the Service to "address unit manning versus the individual replacement system versus hybrid systems...to study unit rotation options including potential missions, size of units, duration...policy implications for the Army, implications on reserve components and mobilizations, and methods to exploit technology to ensure that human



resources battlefield functions support soldiers and leaders while reducing the support footprint in theater.”<sup>39</sup>

From a historical perspective, the current replacement system has been in effect for well over 50 years. Assignments are filled by individual replacements after considering authorizations, current fill levels, and projected losses. During most of World War II, the Army utilized an individual replacement system.<sup>40</sup> However, one study conducted after the war ended determined that system was a failure in terms of the ability to build unit cohesion.<sup>41</sup> During the Korean War, the Army again used the individual replacement system as the baseline, with a tour policy of one year being implemented to minimize combat exposure.<sup>42</sup> After the war ended, the Army tested numerous unit manning concepts, but all were canceled for not meeting readiness objectives or due to the cost involved.<sup>43</sup> Some have concluded that the Army simply returned to the easily manageable individual replacement system, instead of attempting to find a way to implement a unit manning concept that would work for the Army.<sup>44</sup> During the Vietnam War, the one year tour policy again provided focus on the individual and negatively impacted unit cohesion.<sup>45</sup>

During the 1980's, the Army implemented a unit manning system called Cohesion, Operational Readiness, and Training (COHORT). This program assessed numerous variations both at company and battalion level, in both the United States and at overseas locations. The motivation for this effort was the belief that stabilizing and training personnel together would improve cohesion and training, and would support unit movements to overseas locations thereby reducing Permanent Change of Station requirements on individuals.

In 1988, General Max Thurman, the Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) Commander, conducted a study to assess this manning system and concluded that “COHORT lacked focus...created perceptions of have-have not between participants and non-participants...was poorly timed with Division 86 initiatives...but had long term potential for improving heavy force readiness.”<sup>46</sup> He also recommended the Army continue the program but with changes in focus and evaluation procedures, and warned “that enhanced readiness would not automatically accrue from stabilization...and leaders who understand the dynamics of group cohesion must exploit it.”<sup>47</sup>

After implementing some of the recommendations from General Thurman, the program was ended in 1993 at the request of the XVIII Airborne Corps Commanding General because the turbulence on non-participating units was just too high.<sup>48</sup> The inefficiency and low readiness caused by the total reorganization of participating units was more than the assignment system could bear.<sup>49</sup>

Numerous research studies have been conducted on COHORT and the previous unit manning initiatives attempted by the Army since the program was ended. In one study, the Walter Reed Institute of Research concluded that “the COHORT concept works” and confirmed “what any experienced commander knows...that the longer soldiers train together the better they know one another and the better they perform.”<sup>50</sup> One study author concluded that COHORT soldiers and their families were more stabilized and that COHORT units tended to be more combat ready than non-COHORT units.<sup>51</sup> He also determined that “cohesion among soldiers is the by-product of good leadership combined with fulfilling work.”<sup>52</sup> Stability, in other words, was not the only factor in forming a cohesive unit.

From a wartime perspective, one study author concluded that a COHORT system would not be effective, especially in a large mobilization effort necessary to support the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) scenario. The COHORT system worked very well in peacetime, but the Army was not ready to make the necessary changes necessary to make the COHORT system work in war. In short, the Army should continue to utilize the individual replacement system during times of war.<sup>53</sup>

In recent years, many reformers have advocated unit manning as the right step for the army, and by changing the personnel system and implementing unit manning, the Army will have created the mechanism needed to improve unit cohesion and overall readiness.<sup>54</sup> At the same time, some contend the Army is just not willing to make the necessary changes to the total personnel system that will allow implementation of a successful unit manning system. The recent Elton Study concluded there was a need to make changes favoring unit equity over individual equity if the Army were to succeed at building cohesive units for the Objective Force.<sup>55</sup> In supporting that conclusion, the study focused on a need to reduce the size of the Table of Distribution and Allowance (TDA) Army, reduce over strength headquarters, and to decrease the size of the Training, Transient, Holdee, and Student (TTHS) account.<sup>56</sup>

From a readiness perspective in the Army today, the individual replacement system is often blamed for training issues, shortages in units, logistical issues, and a lack of cohesion. In a recent study concerning manning, the authors concluded that the replacement system “must provide a sense of cohesion to fighting units if they are to be effective in creating a combat ready force,” and that “the manning system must consist of a combination of individual, unit, and package replacement systems which could easily adapt to mobilization and wartime, including the Reserve Components.”<sup>57</sup>

Given the history of unit manning in the Army, there are ample research and lessons learned available to the Task Force to assist in developing a new approach to the unit manning

concept. This new concept will focus on synchronizing individual soldier assignments with the unit's life cycle, with a goal of increasing unit stability, providing enhancement to soldier well-being, and creating a cohesive fighting unit.<sup>58</sup> The Task Force anticipates that implementation of a unit manning program will produce fewer non-deployable soldiers and have a positive impact on readiness within the unit.<sup>59</sup> The current timeline includes a directive from the Secretary of the Army, who asked for "changes relating to force readiness through unit manning and unit rotation as early as Summer 2003, with options being presented in late May."<sup>60</sup>

At this time, the Task Force is centering on brigade size units for inclusion in the unit manning concept. In particular, the 33 maneuver brigades across the Army are the key units under consideration. That is not to say institutional or other types of units could not be included in a unit manning concept. But any test needs a start point, and these maneuver brigades are the most likely units to be included. As part of the overall unit manning study, the Task Force is considering three manning alternatives.

The first alternative is individual replacement manning. Regardless of any new initiatives in unit manning, the Army will still need an Individual Manning System. But that system will require changes to the current process and to personnel policy.<sup>61</sup> This system can be described as manning a unit with replacements throughout the year, with normal personnel turnover occurring almost continually. If the Army chooses this alternative alone over a unit manning option, the Army will likely continue to utilize personnel policies such as Stop Loss and Stop Movement to provide unit cohesion during time of war or combat operations. These policies were utilized during both Gulf Wars.

The second alternative is Life Cycle Unit Manning, a method to build a unit with a personnel turnover rate of up to 50 percent at the end of the utilization period. This option assumes the soldiers and leaders will assemble, train and be utilized together during the life cycle of the unit. During the "build" phase of this option, new personnel arrive at the unit and initial bonding begins to occur. This is followed by the "train" phase, consisting of individual and collective training. Bonding and cohesion are solidified during this phase. During the "employment" phase, the unit is available for utilization and this phase includes a scheduled six month rotation to an overseas location. This proposal assumes a 30 month life cycle, with individual or package replacements provided to the unit to compensate for the types of losses such as medical and legal which will always occur in a unit. At the end of the utilization cycle, personnel scheduled to depart the unit for reasons such as reassignment, schools, or completion of military service, will process out of the unit and the cycle begins again.<sup>62</sup>

The final proposed alternative is Cyclic Continuous Manning, characterized by a “regeneration and employment” phase, that includes a six month unit rotation to an overseas location. During the approximate three month “regeneration” phase, leader and soldier reassignments will be synchronized based on an assumed turnover of 15-30 percent of the unit. Both individual and package replacements will be provided to fill the unit. Individual and collective training will occur during the regeneration phase. The next 10-14 months consists of the “employment” phase, and ends with a scheduled six month unit rotation to an overseas location. Upon returning from the unit rotation, the cyclic process would begin again. This alternative could likely support different time lines for employment of different types of units. This could also support brigade level and technical, low density support units.<sup>63</sup>

In many respects, the proposals being considered are very similar to the rotation system utilized by Navy Battle Groups, Marine Amphibious Ready Groups and Air Expeditionary Forces.<sup>64</sup> The cyclic rotations utilized by the other services impact training, maintenance, deployments, and readiness. The lessons learned by the other services should assist the Army in the way ahead for unit manning.

In the coming months, the Army will begin the test and evaluation of these and other aspects of unit manning. The Alaska Stryker Brigade, which is the 172d Infantry Brigade at Fort Wainwright, Alaska, will be the first unit to test this new concept.<sup>65</sup> Beginning in October of this year, the test will allow identification of personnel policies, laws and other critical changes needed for the program to succeed.<sup>66</sup> From a test evaluation perspective, the Task Force is developing metrics to learn both the advantages and disadvantages concerning unit manning.<sup>67</sup>

Although there are numerous second and third order effects of unit manning, one key impact is the ability to have unit rotations to overseas locations such as Europe, Korea and the Middle East. To put this in perspective, at the end of FY 2000, over 30% of the Army's enlisted authorizations were overseas, mainly in Korea and Germany.<sup>68</sup> In March of this year, more than 198,000 soldiers were deployed or forward stationed around the globe.<sup>69</sup> The issue of forward basing has been raised by the Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee based upon national security changes in the world and evolving American interests.<sup>70</sup> The Secretary of the Army was more specific, focusing on home-basing units in the United States and rotating them to overseas locations to meet force and military to military requirements in those regions. The objectives of this potential change would be “more cohesive units, a more stable situation for our soldiers and their families, and therefore higher readiness levels, as opposed to a personnel system right now that detracts from that.”<sup>71</sup>

This home-basing approach could work, for example, by building upon either Life Cycle Unit Manning or Cyclic Continuous Manning. If all 33 brigades or brigade equivalent ground maneuver units in the Army are converted to unit manning and home-based in the United States, these units could be used for some or all of the current overseas missions by means of unit rotations.<sup>72</sup> With only ten active duty divisions, the key to this scenario involves a reassessment of where Army forces need to be stationed overseas. The negative aspect of this scenario involves giving up a large number of accompanied overseas assignments, which are enjoyed by many personnel in the Army today. On the other hand, this alternative involves the potential for longer time on station at locations in the United States, the chance to establish family roots, less disruption to education of children, and much more family predictability than exists today in the Army.

In any event, the start point from the national level involves a reassessment of national security interests and the resultant ways and means to achieve those interests. From that assessment, a decision on setting the force and overseas basing in Europe, Korea and the Middle East as to location and amount of forces needed to support the global mission of the military would occur. That decision, taken in concert with a unit manning decision, would determine how often brigades would complete overseas rotations in the unit manning scenario. Further assessments will be needed to determine the impact on retention of changing to an assignment system based on six month rotations instead of the current policy that allows for overseas accompanied tours. If rotations are too frequent, this approach could be counterproductive and have a negative impact on retention.

One other area which must be assessed now and during the test phase involves officer and enlisted leader development. Assuming the Army goes forward with unit manning, numerous personnel policies and laws will need adjustment to allow the program to succeed. For example, infantry platoon leaders today serve an average of 14 months as a platoon leader. By lengthening the time a platoon leader remains in a unit, the opportunities to train other Lieutenants in this critical leader development job will be significantly reduced.<sup>73</sup> The same will hold true for other jobs such as Battalion S3, Battalion Executive Officer, Company, Battalion and Brigade Commander. This same scenario must be applied to critical enlisted assignments. To address these types of leader development issues, the Task Force proposes that movement of personnel within the brigade will be the brigade's responsibility, whereas movement into and out of the brigade would occur at a higher level, such as Department of the Army. Regardless, the Army must take cultural and operational change into account prior to implementation of a unit manning system and must address key impacts of the current system on leader

development. Enough flexibility must be built into the unit manning system to allow Commanders and Command Sergeants Major to make critical decisions for their own organizations. That type of flexibility will be needed to make unit manning a success.

## **SUMMARY**

In early 2000, the Army DCSPER realized that changing the Army personnel system would be critical to the overall success of the Army Transformation effort. His dream and vision was to transform the Army's personnel and finance systems so they would be "waiting at the finish line" when the rest of the Army arrived at the Objective Force in 2015. The key to achieving that vision lies in the current and planned efforts concerning the Personnel Enterprise System. During the Initial Phase of Personnel Transformation, dramatic change is occurring in the Army, and much more change is on the way.

Much progress has been achieved in the Personnel Enterprise System effort to transition legacy system operational capabilities, but much work remains to be completed. Successfully fielding eMILPO throughout the Army, the development of electronic signature capability, the full introduction of the Enlisted Record Brief, new electronic record solutions and much more must be achieved. In this regard, elimination and redesign of personnel structure remains contingent on the ability to deliver the promised enablers.

For DIMHRS, which is the most crucial Personnel Enterprise System enabler, the Army appears to be on track as the lead service in developing and fielding this system. Key to this effort will be the ability to stay on track during the design phase once the contractor is identified and to ensure DIMHRS is successfully linked to the Future Combat System.

In the area of unit manning, the answer to the question, "Is unit manning the assignment system needed to support the Objective Force Army?" remains to be determined. Once initial testing and analysis is completed, much more will be known about this issue. This unit manning test is not simply a re-do of the COHORT test from the 1980's. What is clear is the infinite possibilities unit manning offers to the Army and the enormous change it will necessitate in the personnel system, all the way to the Objective Force and beyond. For that reason alone, if unit manning is adopted, it will serve as an early test for Personnel Transformation in the area of flexibility and ability to change, and for the evolving personnel system being designed to support the Objective Force Army.

Most importantly, unit manning provides the Army with the method of building cohesive brigade size units, and enables the implementation of unit rotation to support overseas and global commitments. If unit rotation is implemented, many choices remain in the coming

months and years. There is much discussion concerning force structure, numbers of Divisions and Corps, return of forces to the United States, and utilization of reserve forces to meet mission requirements. If unit manning is implemented, the key to its success will likely center on the Army's ability to synchronize the institutional Army in support of the unit manning concept.

Is Personnel Transformation currently on track in the drive to the Objective Force? The answer at this time is a guarded yes. The Personnel Enterprise System results achieved during the next 12 months will be most critical in determining the scorecard for Personnel Transformation. Successfully fielding eMILPO, producing the needed personnel enablers on time, addressing any shortfalls identified such as reassignment processing, while concurrently designing and fielding DIMHRS must be achieved before declaring victory in this initial effort. All the while, the personnel system must be prepared for the change which will occur during the Interim and Objective Capability Phases. The decision on unit manning and unit rotation will have far reaching impacts on the Personnel Transformation effort. If designed and developed with the vision of the late DCSPER, Personnel Transformation will weather the blind curves ahead, will be flexible enough to receive major changes such as that offered by unit manning, and will ultimately be standing there waiting on the Objective Force Army.

Word Count: 6887

## ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Dennis Steele, "Realizing the Army Vision," Army, December 2002, p. 47.
- <sup>2</sup> Department of the Army, Army Transformation Roadmap, Department of the Army Publication (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Army, June 2002), p.7.
- <sup>3</sup> Paul Wolfowitz, Deputy Secretary of Defense, "Prepared Statement for the Senate Armed Services Committee Hearing on Military Transformation." Speech to the Senate Armed Services Committee, 9 April 2002.
- <sup>4</sup> Steele, p. 52.
- <sup>5</sup> "CSA White Paper," 8 November 2001, Objective Force Case Study, Carlisle Barracks: US Army War College, Carlisle, Pennsylvania. p. 56.
- <sup>6</sup> Department of the Army, Army Transformation Roadmap, Department of the Army Publication (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Army, June 2002), p.14.
- <sup>7</sup> "Key Issues Relevant to the Army's Transformation to the Objective Force," AUSA Torchbearer, Vol.1, September 2001. p. 3.
- <sup>8</sup> "CSA White Paper," 8 November 2001, Objective Force Case Study, Carlisle Barracks: US Army War College, Carlisle, Pennsylvania. p. 56.
- <sup>9</sup> Steele, p.52.
- <sup>10</sup> David Chu, "Military Transformation Also Requires Transforming Personnel Management." Defense Daily, 31 May 2002. p.1.
- <sup>11</sup> Sean D. Naylor, "Secretary Pushes for Large-Scale Personnel Reform," Army Times. 16 September 2002, p. 14.
- <sup>12</sup> John M. Le Moyne, "We Will Not Forget," Army, Vol. 52, no 10, October 2002, p. 127.
- <sup>13</sup> "Human Resource Annex," Final Coordinating Draft to the Army Transformation Campaign Plan, 16 December 2002, p. 5.
- <sup>14</sup> Le Moyne, p. 128.
- <sup>15</sup> Statement By Lieutenant General John M. Le Moyne, Deputy Chief of Staff, G1, United States Army, presented to the Total Force Subcommittee, House Armed Services Committee, 108<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1<sup>st</sup> Session. Washington, D.C., 13 March 2003.
- <sup>16</sup> Naylor, p. 14.
- <sup>17</sup> John M. Riggs, "The Objective Force in 2015 White Paper, Final Draft, 8 December 2002. p. 2. This refers to the same as joint in today's military.
- <sup>18</sup> *Ibid.* p. 1.



<sup>19</sup> Ibid. p.13.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid. p. 29.

<sup>21</sup> "Human Resource Annex," Final Coordinating Draft to the Army Transformation Campaign Plan, 16 December 2002, p. 4.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid. p. 5.

<sup>23</sup> Le Moyne statement to the House Armed Services Committee, 13 March 2003.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Email from COL(P) Farrisee, The Adjutant General, 13 September 2002, SUBJ: eMILPO Update.

<sup>26</sup> "Human Resource Annex," Final Coordinating Draft to the Army Transformation Campaign Plan, 16 December 2002, p. 9.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid. p.9.

<sup>28</sup> Briefing, Enlisted Promotion System Update, Personnel Leaders Summit, Fort Jackson, South Carolina, 10 December 2002.

<sup>29</sup> David S. C. Chu, DIMHRS, Memorandum For Secretaries of the Military Departments, 19 August 2002, p.1.

<sup>30</sup> Briefing, DIMHRS Overview, Department of Defense, December 2002, p. 3.

<sup>31</sup> Thomas E. White, Secretary of the Army, and General Eric K. Shinseki, Army Chief of Staff. "Army Knowledge Management (AKM) Guidance Memorandum Number 3." Memorandum for the Army. Washington, D.C., 4 March 2003

<sup>32</sup> Douglas R. Campbell, "Implications For Personnel Transformation." Army Acquisition, Logistics & Technology (AL & T) Magazine, July-August 2002, p. 7.

<sup>33</sup> Web Site, DIMHRS, Frequently Asked Questions, <https://akocomm.us.army.mil/dimhrs/faqs.htm>, 27 April 2003.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> "Human Resource Annex," Final Coordinating Draft to the Army Transformation Campaign Plan, 16 December 2002, p. 6.

<sup>36</sup> Sue B. Dueitt, "Personnel Transformation: The Journey Continues." Army Acquisition, Logistics and Technology (AL & T) Magazine. July-August 2002, p.5.

<sup>37</sup> White Interview, Army Times, 16 September 2002, p.14

<sup>38</sup> Jim Tice, "Task Force To Address Unit Manning System," Army Times, 14 October 2002, p.25.

<sup>39</sup> Thomas E. White, Secretary of the Army, Memorandum for CSA, Subject: Manpower and Personnel Transformation, 17 December 2002, pp. 3-4.

<sup>40</sup> Robert M. Elton and Joseph Trez, "A Unit Manning System for the Objective Force: Recommendations for Vital Changes in Army Manning Policies, p.3.

<sup>41</sup> Peter W. Kozumplik, Comparative Wartime Replacement Systems, Washington: Defense Intelligence Agency, 11 November 1986, pp 3-4.

<sup>42</sup> Elton and Trez, p. 3.

<sup>43</sup> LTC Alford, Information Paper, Subject: Unit Manning Concepts, COHORT, and the Thurman Assessment, 10 September 1999, p.1.

<sup>44</sup> Elton and Trez, p. 4.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>46</sup> Alford, p.2

<sup>47</sup> Ibid. p.2.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid. p.2.

<sup>49</sup> Kenneth C. Scully, "What We Learned From COHORT," Strategy Research Project. Carlisle Barracks: U.S. Army War College, 2 April 1990, p. 24.

<sup>50</sup> James G. Pulley, "The COHORT System – Is It Meeting The Army's Needs?" Strategy Research Project. Carlisle Barracks: U.S. Army War College, 6 June 1988, p. 24.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid. p. 24.

<sup>52</sup> Scully, p. 24.

<sup>53</sup> John I. Wood III, "Can the Unit Manning System Sustain in War?" Strategy Research Project. Carlisle Barracks: U.S. Army War College, 31 March 1988, pp. 2 and 16.

<sup>54</sup> Donald E. Vandergriff, The Path to Victory: American's Army and the Revolution in Human Affairs. Novato, California: Presidio Press, 2002, p. 268.

<sup>55</sup> Elton and Trez, p. 8.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid. p. 8.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid. p. 5.

<sup>58</sup> Paul Thornton, Unit Manning System Information Paper, email from LTC Paul Thornton to the author, 4 April 2003.

<sup>59</sup> David Goehring, Unit Manning System Information Paper, email from LTC Paul Thornton to the author, 21 March 2003.

<sup>60</sup> Thomas E. White, Secretary of the Army, Memorandum for CSA, Subject: Manpower and Personnel Transformation, 17 December 2002, p 4.

<sup>61</sup> Goehring, Unit Manning System Information Paper.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Tim Reese, "The Blind Men and the Elephant," Armor Vol. 111, Issue 3 (May/June 2002), p. 10.

<sup>65</sup> Joe Burlas, "Alaska Stryker Brigade First to Go With Unit Manning," Army News Service, Washington, D.C., 5 May 2003.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> The Task Force is working with the Rand Corporation and ARI to develop the metrics to be utilized in the test. Email from LTC Thornton to the author, 4 April 03.

<sup>68</sup> Julie Trego Manta, "An Enlisted Assignment System for a Transformed Army." Strategy Research Project. Carlisle Barracks: U.S. Army War College, 10 April 2001, p. 5.

<sup>69</sup> Le Moyne Statement, p. 2.

<sup>70</sup> Rick Maze, "Experts Warn Against Restructuring Force in Europe," Army Times, 17 March 2003, p. 18.

<sup>71</sup> White Interview, Army Times, 16 September 2002, p.14.

<sup>72</sup> Sean Naylor, "Who Will Be First?" Army Times, 5 May 2003, p. 8. While a model to support the unit rotations necessary to meet overseas requirements is not part of the scope of this paper, that aspect is currently being analyzed.

<sup>73</sup> Interview with COL Karl Knoblauch, Officer Policy Chief, Office of the G1, 4 April 2003.

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